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February - March 1984





# THE

# DOUBLE

# STANDARD

by Mike Colonnese

November 13, 1983



Mr. Reagan has frequently criticized the Sandinista government for not having held elections. This is proof of "totalitarianism". However, during those three years the Sandinistas have done all that must be done to prepare people for democracy. Most important of the activities has been the extremely successful literacy program. People who were never able to read or write are now able to do so. The Philippines have not had elections for 18 years. Mr. Reagan has never voiced criticism of that government for its "totalitarianism". Paraguay, another Reagan ally, has not had elections for over thirty years, but that is not an infringement on human rights. Brazil, Chile, Guatemala and others have not had elections, but neither Mr. Reagan nor the State Department have ever mentioned that direct violation of human rights in the democratic context. And neither have these countries prepared their people for democratic exercise with literacy programs and other educational efforts.

Another issue is that of "religious persecution" in Nicaragua. This persecution seems to exist in the minds of a couple of bishops and a handful of reactionary priests and religious. Two foreign priests were expelled from the country for their political activities. What would happen if two priests (foreigners) in the USA became deeply involved politically, to the extent of trying to overthrow the government? As a matter of fact, what would happen to two American priests who were accused of doing that? The expulsion of two priests does not spell out religious persecution. Yet Mr. Reagan and the State Department have used that as a basis for their constant attacks on the Sandinista revolution. Yet, in Guatemala, where the US ambassador Chapin says there is no violation of human rights, a priest was killed last week. The Chief of Army Staff admits that a number of Catholic catechists are jailed. A bishop is in exile. How-

ever, neither Mr. Reagan nor the State Department has mentioned religious persecution in that country.

More than a dozen priests, an archbishop, and dozens of catechists have been killed in El Salvador, precisely because of their pastoral ministry. Four American women, three of them religious sisters, were violated and assassinated in El Salvador, but all was with impunity. Mr. Reagan does not even pursue the killing of the four American women in the courts. Yet he invaded an



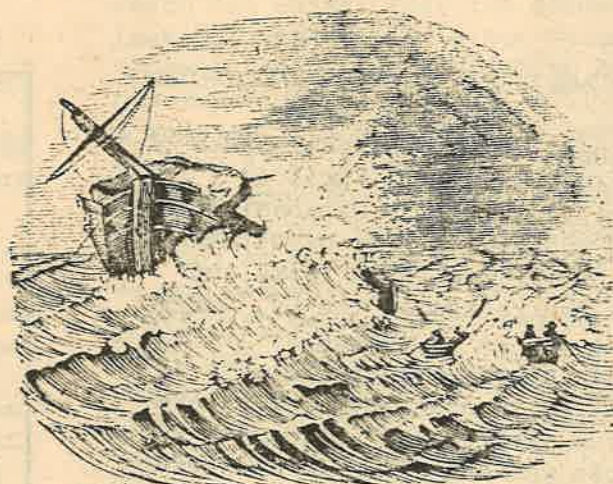
island to protect American lives that were not in danger. But the lives of four American women are not important to him. While Americans applaud Mr. Reagan's big stick tactics they had better investigate the total significance of those tactics. On the surface they might seem very patriotic, but under the veneer they spell out serious danger in the future.

Christians are faced with a more serious dilemma. If they support Mr. Reagan's policies of military aggression (which mean the death of people) how do they reconcile that with the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill"? To kill is sinful (and more so when you are not being attacked). That's why we say our sins killed the Son of God. To kill the children of God is sinful-- the American people are involved in a serious situation of sin. God will not talk to us Christians about borders and national security. He will say that whatever we did to the least of his brethren we did to him. To kill Nicaraguans in an act of aggression is sinful. It is a sin from which no American can escape, especially the leaders of our Christian churches who have an additional responsibility to give witness and to teach. There is no escaping the judgment of God. But let us not approach it so negatively. Our Lord tells us that no one has greater love than one who

gives his life for another. How do we reconcile that with our obsession with national security? How do we reconcile this with the hatred we teach about the Russians, the Cubans and the Nicaraguans, or anyone else who disagrees with us? For Christians the political issues of today, especially those concerning Central America, cannot be judged in a limited political context. They have far-reaching moral and religious implications for us and our response to Jesus. "Blessed are the peacemakers," we read. That does not mean to make war. "Love one another as I have loved you." That does not mean inciting Americans to hate as the electronic fundamentalist preachers are so adept at doing.

The double standards being used by our president confront us with some very serious faith questions. I am not talking about some dogma which, in the long run, really doesn't have that much significance for our salvation. I am talking about issues of human life. I am talking about the blood of Christ which was spilled so that humankind might have life, not lose it. I am talking about the means our president uses to achieve a seriously questionable objective. I am talking about the Big Lie which has captivated Americans by playing on their greed and selfishness, their materialism. These double standards are dangerous. The real danger exists for us in the future. We do not know what standard will then be used for us.

(Mike Colonnese lives in Mexico and works with Central American refugees. He is a frequent correspondent on Central American issues)





# via pacis

VIA PACIS is published every two months by the Des Moines Catholic Worker, Box 4551, Des Moines, IA 50306. Telephone 515-243-0765 or 243-7471. We maintain Lazarus House of Hospitality at 1317 8th St., a temporary shelter for women, couples and families, and Monsignor Ligutti Library and Peace and Justice Center at 1301 8th St..

MASS is celebrated at Lazarus House every Friday, 7:30 PM. A great way to visit the CW.

Proposed bike ride to benefit homeless. Contact Dan McFadden Box 8414, DM, IA 50301



Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the tremendous response to our past appeals for help.

Of course we still have needs. Utmost-- we have been handing out a lot of bags of groceries at the door, and our pantry is often low. Please send food! Canned food, staples, anything nourishing. Six months ago perhaps one or two requests for groceries a day was all we'd get. Currently we have more requests than we can deal with.



## appeal

Meanwhile, an emergency shelter has been opened at Trinity United Methodist Church here in DM. They urgently need fold-up cots and blankets.

Also, cleaning supplies and trash bags would be greatly appreciated here at the CW.

LENTEN DESERT EXPERIENCE  
Witness against nuclear bomb testing at Nevada Test Site, April 1-30. Contact: LDE, Franciscan Friars of California 1500 34th Ave. Oakland, CA 94601 (415) 536-3772



*Women's Peace Presence  
To Stop Project Elf  
National Media Web  
1016 N. 9th St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53233*

Women's peace camp to be established in Chequamegon National Forest, Wisconsin, to protest construction of Project ELF. (Transmitter to Trident submarines around world.) Material needs of women's peace camp are great. Opening day May 28, 1984.

PRAAYER AND PEACEMAKING gathering March 30-31  
Ahmanson Law Center  
Creighton U., Omaha, Nebraska  
Keynote speakers:  
Dan Berrigan, Theresa Kane  
contact: New Covenant Center  
1717 IZard, Omaha NE 68102  
402-345-0539

SAC Demonstration Feb. 25  
Organizational meeting for demo Jan. 26, Campus Ministry Center 28th & University, 4:00 PM.  
--Becca Potter  
Drake Peace Task Force

## community

Donna Henderson  
Cindy Blake  
Patti McKee  
Mike Sprong  
Russ Simmons  
Dave Stein  
Nick McNamara  
Maggie Olson  
Jim Harrington  
Kris Wolffe  
Norman Searah



DAY AGAINST APARTHEID AND RACISM  
April 4, 1984

As part of the National Weeks of Action, (March 21- April 4)  
April 4 will be a National Armband and Protest Day for Divestment from South Africa-linked firms and against racism in the US. During that day we encourage activists to organize divestment protests as well as to distribute black armbands symbolizing solidarity with those who have died in the struggles against South African apartheid and US racism.

## VET CENTER

VET CENTER-- 3619 6th Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50313  
(515) 284-6119

2nd annual Vietnam veterans' reunion, May 26-28 at Hotel Savery, Des Moines. Vets' art show, Memorial Day service at Vets' Auditorium and Iowa Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedication ceremony. For info call John at above number.

Vet Center will provide individual counseling for significant others each Monday afternoon. Call Tom.

Open AA meeting every Thursday at 6:30 PM for veterans and non-veterans. Call Terry.

Iowa Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program, Inc. (VVLPI), an organization dedicated to solving chronic unemployment problems of Vietnam veterans, has established an office in Room 502 of Merle Hay Towers building in Des Moines. For more info call Norm Harris, Dick Knight or Bob Tecklenburg at (515) 276-9140.



# THE PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN DARKNESS HAVE SEEN A GREAT LIGHT

BY DONNA HENDERSON

I wondered during dinner how I could share with you the humanity of the poor and the homeless. I looked around the dining room, tuning into one conversation, then another, and then another. The conversations were many and varied, no two alike, and, yet, strangely similar. Often our guests share their stories of trying to find work, home, and happiness. Sometimes, the stories include their attempts to convince social service agencies that they are among the "truly needy." Their faces and voices usually show a tremendous amount of hope, false though it may be, in their ability to find work and dignity.

Who were "the people who walked in darkness"? A people oppressed by the strong: a people despised by those who had conquered them: a people tormented by the insecurity of their oppressors: a people driven to despair by the constant reminders of their servitude.

Sometimes, our house is perceived as bizarre--a place to which those who today live in darkness come: people oppressed by an economic system based on greed, people despised by a society which refuses to acknowledge their dignity, people plagued by financial insecurity in a society which preys on fear for

the sake of investment, people tormented by mental illness in a society which cannot bear to see their pain. They are hungry, not only for food but for justice. They are poor, not only financially but spiritually. They are tired, not only physically but emotionally.

Often the events which change the lives of the poor and disabled the most dramatically are not acts of God but acts of social workers and bureaucrats. For instance, many of our guests were the beneficiaries of social security disability payments only to be recently cut off from all assistance, not because they were no longer disabled but because the eligibility standards had changed. These women have not experienced a mere reduction in their benefits but a total loss of benefits. Having been summarily declared to be among the "undeserving," their economic status went from subsistence to destitution. The most tragic of these situations are those in which the woman suffers from some mental illness. The removal of benefits never "drives" them to health, but it often aggravates their condition. The pain of these women and the children who follow them is the pain of Christ, and it is our pain.

Our human image is God's image, created by and for love. Christ took on our human image, but he allowed himself to be completely human, a most perfect image of our God. In this we are bound inextricably to Christ and the poor. The nature of our humanity is perfection: our humanness is perfect.

Christ was the light to lead the people out of darkness. Have the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the mentally ill and the cold seen the Great Light?

Christ is the light to lead the people out of darkness, not in his physical body, and not in some cold, stone edifice, but in our human form. If Christ is our Great Light and we are called to perfection in him, to live and work as he lived and worked, we must be the light to the oppressed. We must respond to the cries of pain. We must answer Christ's call to us in the poor.

I cannot bring our guests to you. I cannot tell you all of their stories. I cannot share their pain with you. I can only tell you how I have come to know them to be human beings, merely seeking to know the fullness in which they were created and to be those who call us to a loving response to Christ Jesus in them.

## Alleluia ~ Sing Praises to Our Lord

by Maggie Olson

The title of my article may not be clear as you read what I've written but bear with me and hopefully when I've finished it will be clear.

Before leaving for my sentencing in Omaha I read a book entitled Desert Windows by Eddie Doherty, a man who was ordained into the priesthood at the age of 75. I enjoyed his book because it had a very simple message; it seemed to speak to me. The one line which stuck in my mind was, "If you can't rub noses with God then rub elbows with his friends." I like catchy little phrases like that, simple but profound.

As you know, I then went for my sentencing and received 30 days at Douglas County Correctional Center in Omaha. I expected time in jail, in fact it's always been in my plan of protest. I want to say here that going to jail or prison is a personal witness and not for everyone. I have so many friends who choose to witness in other ways. They are living their witness through their work, doing all the necessary, often unnoticed duties which enable someone like myself to continue. How could anyone willingly face confinement if their weren't loving people to greet you on your return and to keep your spirits up while you're away?

I think during my time at Douglas County I went through every emotion-- pretty good for 30 days-- but as most of you know, emotions are my specialty. I guess you might say I dared the judge to sentence me and he was obliged to do so. I wasn't quite sure what it all would be like but I looked forward to the experience. The routine there is easy to fit into. After a few days I was beginning to feel deserted so I wrote letters reaching out to those I left behind, saying, "Please don't forget me." It's always in your mind that when you're gone you will suffer for your sins. I recognize my faults and, let's face it, I've been a pain at times. A little confession is good for the soul.

When letters started coming I knew I'd been forgiven and not forgotten, so I settled in and surveyed my surroundings. Here was the neat part-- there were friends here too. We shared our joys and our sorrows, our ups and our downs. We also shared our shampoo, deodorant and dimes for the phone. We swapped stories and experiences, we became community for each other. I was accepted and it was good. I became so comfortable that I found myself being human, being selfish, being sorry and being forgiven. I found God there as I've never experienced Him. You might say I was a "captive audience."

When my time was near the end I looked forward to coming home. I missed my family, my friends, my sons. But when I left I felt that familiar sting, that pain of leaving those I now loved, there, in the place that had been my home those 30 days. There were the tears, those tears that always give me away, those tears that say, I need you.

So I'm home and it's back to business as usual. I'm going back to Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha in a few months, to protest again. I'm planning to be sentenced again, this time for longer, this time perhaps prison. I'll go through the same emotions and perhaps add some new ones. I'll say goodbye again, reach out again, feel the sting of leaving. There will be new friends to meet there, new stories to hear, new experiences to share. I'll find a home again and sisters to love. When my stay is done I'll come home here to you, the people I love, and pray you won't have forgotten me.

So, as you see, my friends, as we rub elbows-- as we long to rub noses with God-- we are led by love, the love in each human we meet, the Christ in each one of us. For the love we share and this kingdom of peace here and now, Alleluia, give praises to our Lord.



# Who Are We?

by David Stein

One of the things with which I am most dissatisfied in the peace movement in America is our tendency to endlessly repeat our message to each other, that is, to people who already know about our pet issues, and indeed already agree with us on the main points. This tendency is an easy thing to fall into, it has its pleasures and comforts, but it challenges no one and changes nothing.

Via Pacis is a labor of great love for me and most of the rest of us in the Des Moines Catholic Worker, but what a waste it all would be (think of the trees) if it was only read by people belonging to our own little circle, who are not likely to be fundamentally challenged by what they read here.

With this thought in mind, I have often employed a more anarchistic method of distribution of Via Pacis. (We print a few hundred copies in excess of the demands of our 3000+ mailing list.) I leave copies of Via Pacis in libraries, buses, laundromats, banks, and even in the very heart of that bastion of elitism and privilege, the college campus. Recently I took a walk over to one of our great institutions of Higher Emptiness, Drake University, to see a movie, and was astonished to see two students actually READING VIA PACIS! My elation can scarcely be described.

When I got home after the movie (It was "Monty Python and the Holy Grail".) I picked up a copy of VP and tried to read it with new eyes, imagining myself one of those students, or anyone else picking up one of those scattered VP's, (...and some of the seed fell on stony ground....) a person who had never heard of the Catholic Worker movement before. What impression would I get?

It became clear to me that there was little in an average issue that really clarifies who we are and what we do. You find us sometimes denouncing the government and sometimes expressing religious reflections, but too often there is not much of a framework or context or background the uninitiated reader can place all this within.

So it is with the motive of addressing this deficiency that I humbly (it may already be too late for that) try to explain what this paper is all about, and why it means so much more than meets the eye.

WHAT THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT BELIEVES, AND WHAT THE DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER DOES:

The Catholic Worker movement believes in direct, personal service to the poor. We believe that each and every individual has a sacred obligation to help the poor, at one's own expense and sacrifice, by sharing one's own goods, one's own space and time. We believe that

the various commandments to feed the hungry and shelter the homeless are to be taken literally. It is not a job to be handed over to a corps of bureaucrats and "professionals". What's more, we do not believe in insulting the poor by forcing them to prove themselves "worthy" or "deserving" in order to receive help. Our goods are theirs by God-given right.

The Des Moines Catholic Worker occupies Lazarus House of Hospitality at 1317 8th St., and Monsignor Ligutti House and Peace and Justice Center at 1301 8th St. Lazarus House functions as a temporary shelter for women, couples and families.

It is a place where people can stay for a limited time (we tell people 10 days, but we often end up making exceptions) until they can find more permanent homes. We also maintain a drop-in center in the basement of Lazarus House, where anyone can come in from anywhere and sit and converse, drink coffee, read, or doze off. In addition, we give boxes of groceries to anyone who needs them, on request, without exception. The meals we serve at Lazarus House are theoretically for our guests who are staying with us, but other people often appear at mealtime and we welcome them too. Lazarus House is where about half of the members of our community (sometimes misnamed the "staff") live.

The rest of the community lives in Ligutti House, and we have also been able to give long-term hospitality there to a few special guests. We lament that there is not enough space to do this for more people, which is why we urge you, the Via Pacis reader, to provide space in your own home.

Ligutti House also contains a very nice little library with many good books and publications about religion, politics and history. The library has fallen into disuse and we beg you to come and take advantage of it.

The Catholic Worker movement believes in community as a mode of living necessary to bring about a just and humane society. We all live together, eat together, and each of us is equal. No one has a title. There is no director, no coordinator, no administrator, no manager. Decisions are made by consensus, which means that each member of the community must agree. This process can be a drag but it beats having a boss.

The C.W. movement is not a religious order in the usual sense, but a philosophy which has grown

mostly out of a Catholic heritage. We generally recognize that this philosophy, or one just as good, can come from many other traditions as well. Thus we are not all Catholic, or even Christian. (I am Jewish.) We celebrate a Catholic Mass at Lazarus House at 7:30 every Friday night. Everyone is invited to come, but we NEVER push religion on our guests.

None of us receives a salary of any amount, though the house will try to pay for the legitimate needs of the community members. All of our material support, money, food, blankets and toothpaste, comes from private donations. We receive no government funding, and indeed would not accept it if offered, since the government requires "charities" and "agencies" to check the credentials of the people served to determine their worthiness, and to keep records of what is given to whom. This we will not do. We receive no funding from the institutional Church (note the capital C) although there are many churches and religious groups that have been very generous with us, and we are grateful for their support. Contributions to the C.W. are not tax-deductible, since we believe that giving should be a personal sacrifice. Besides, you should not be paying any federal taxes at all, considering the proportion of tax money that pays for warfare.

Which brings us to the next point. The Catholic Worker movement believes that direct opposition to war, oppression and injustice is equally important as service to the poor. Our community and those like it around the world are constantly involved in demonstrations and acts of non-violent civil disobedience against the warmaking powers, as a reading of the rest of this newsletter will make clear to you. However, we do not preach politics to our guests any more than we preach religion to them. In fact, most of our guests are not even aware that we're into all this protest stuff.

Those interested in learning more about the C.W. movement are encouraged to seek out the many excellent books by and about Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day, founders of The C.W. in New York in the 1930's. Those interested in learning more about the Des Moines Catholic Worker are encouraged to call or visit us. Remember not to ask who's in charge.



# Warehousing

# the

# Homeless.

by Mike Sprong

No one would dispute the existence of massive numbers of homeless in America. Although many people want to count and produce for public viewing the hordes of ragged destitute, most "concerned" people want to warehouse the homeless. And a massive crumbling structure which to stash the shame of our nation and it's okay.

The Catholic Worker is a hospitality movement. Hospitality vs. warehousing-- that's the question here. Moot are the ideas that: the homeless aren't numerous; there isn't enough money; there isn't enough space; not enough people are willing to put energy into sheltering the homeless. Enter pork-barrel politics. Big liberal spending. When this particular point of

view breaks on the scene complications set in. At least everyone knows Reagan is killing the poor.

The point is-- all the money spent by the Pentagon could be diverted back into human needs. Fine, will we then fall into the trap of the Great Society? Will we once again build architecturally fascist seas of tenement housing? Indeed, America currently faces a tremendous shortage of low-income housing. Here in Des Moines, low-income housing has a 5-year waiting list.

But will we warehouse the homeless, or provide hospitality? (Thought I'd forgotten, didn't you?) Hospitality is providing basic needs in an atmosphere conducive to your guest's keeping her/his dignity. Underlined are atmosphere and guest because those are the keys. "Welfare" in contrast, forces a

client to almost perform back hand-springs, in an uncomfortable atmosphere. Perhaps the bias on my part is somewhat glaring in my analysis.

Nevertheless, many key leaders in the movement to shelter the homeless do not recognize the distinction between warehousing the homeless and hospitality as a lifestyle. This is an essential realization to make if we are truly to give homes to the homeless. Hospitality is not in and of itself the answer. Clearly it is part of the solution. In Iowa we would say "It's only a state of minds." But a change in basic attitudes from hostility to hospitality would be a major step for us as a nation. Besides, when was the last time a social worker told you that his/her primary goal was to eliminate his/her job? Peace.

## IOWA PEACE CHAUTAUQUA

by Bernice Donovan

The purpose of the Iowa Peace Chautauqua is to gather a multitude of people to hear about, sing about peace and justice. Peace on earth with an increased awareness of preserving the environment can only be generated from within. Chautauquas began in 1874 when the water was clear and the air was rich. In the vision of that time it is said, "The chautauqua movement flowered in rural America."



Today when rural America is more a real estate than reality and one hears more of commodities than camaraderie and compassion, there is need to be refreshed, renewed and rejuvenated. Gather the children and plan to come to enjoy the creation. "Come to the valley and hear the winds blow!" Come walk in the woods without crushing the wild flowers. Share with someone the words of the French poet Peguy.

Think of generations of children-- the budding helpless babes of weary parents. Peace!

May 19, 20 1984  
Living History Farms  
Contact: Iowa Peace Chautauqua  
11 Grand Avenue,  
Des Moines, IA 50312  
(515) 274-4851



## THE CALL OF THE CREATOR

by Patti McKee

Oh my God the Creator of all, I want to praise you, but then I feel the world's pull. Oh world, I love some of your ways so much, they are easy to follow, easy to fall into step with the beat of your drum without even knowing it.

Then I hear the Spirit calling me gently to come back,

back to the  
Creator God of all.  
Many times I sway between the two, but knowing in my heart of hearts it is the Creator's call I should heed. But alas I stumble and fall again into the beat of the world. I run with the world so long I almost forget the sound of your voice, my Creator. The tiredness of the world overcomes me; I cry out in my despair. I wonder when will I come to rest. Who shall I follow? I know I must come to rest, I must decide. But I am so torn, so tired. I can't! I can't!  
But again the faithful Creator comes to me again calling  
calling

calling ever more  
strongly my name. This time I know where my home is.  
Creator I am yours.

## LAW + ORDER LESSONS

by Steve Marsden,  
after a day in the holding cell  
in the federal building in Omaha

There was a young fellow in the office who seemed too short and too slim to be an actual federal marshall. After taking three face forward photos, they had him take a profile photo after instructing him in the use of the polaroid. "You'll need to know how to use this thing," he was told. "One day we'll be busy in here and you'll have to help out."

After the photos they started taking my prints. "I've never been able to take good prints," he said.

"It's just like screwing," he was told. "The first time you don't know nothin' about it, but after a while it becomes second nature."

"The key is to go from hard to easy," he was told. Hard to easy refers to how far one's wrist is twisted while they take the prints. "If you go from easy to hard, you might smudge the prints. Be sure to get the deltas."





## RELIGIOUS WOMEN'S PILGRIMAGE FOR PEACE

(reprinted from the 1983 review of the Inter-Religious Task Force on El Salvador & Central America, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 633, New York, NY 10115.)

One hundred fifty U.S. and Canadian religious women-- Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish-- embarked on a pilgrimage to Honduras to pray for peace in Central America in early December. Disturbed by reports of the rapidly expanding, permanent U.S. military presence in Honduras, and by the tragedy of such a buildup threatening to push Honduras into a regional war, they planned to hold prayer services and vigils in 3 major cities and at American military installations in that country. But on December 5, the women were barred from entering Honduras on the grounds that they were "religious".

Fifty of the women, who departed from Miami, got as far as the airport at the capital city, Tegucigalpa. There the plane was kept waiting at the far end of the runway, surrounded by a military contingent, and boarded by armed security police. According to Honduran press reports, U.S. military helicopters participating in the Big Pine II military exercises circled insistently overhead. Only Honduran citizens were allowed to deplane and the women, plus some 20 unrelated passengers, were returned to Miami that same afternoon.

The other 100 women of the pilgrimage at the last minute were prevented from boarding their flight in New Orleans and they took up a protest vigil at the airport. The two groups later decided to go together to Washington, DC, where they held a prayer service in front of the White House after attempting to get clarification from U.S. and Honduran authorities of their entry denial.

The women now plan to continue their efforts to stop the U.S. military buildup and bring peace to the region by pressing Congress for an investigation into U.S. policy toward Honduras. Members of the pilgrimage will meet with their Congresspersons while they are home on recess (until Jan. 23) to urge that hearings be held in February or early March, before the next joint US-Honduran military maneuvers are scheduled to begin.

The women are also considering rescheduling their pilgrimage for Holy Week. Contact the Women's Coalition Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean (which sponsored the peace pilgrimage) for details: 475 Riverside Dr., Room 812, New York, NY 10115.

## REMEMBERING MARTIN LUTHER KING

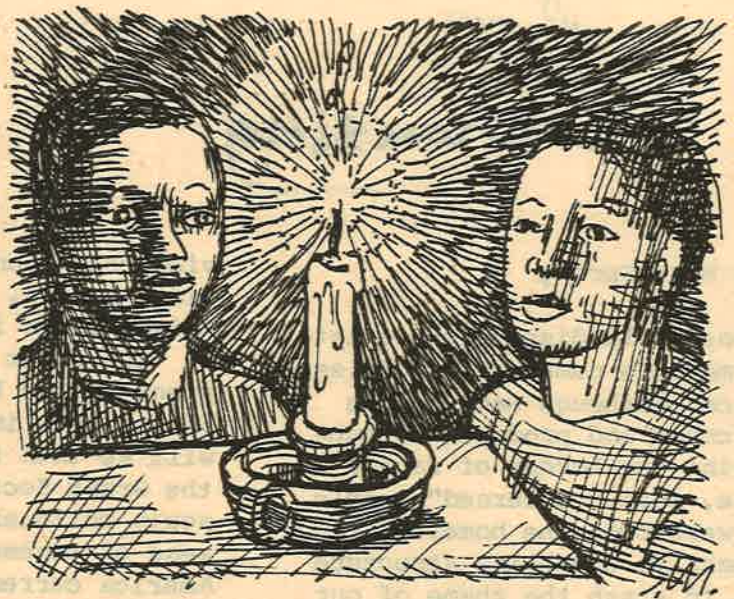
by David Stein

It has been accomplished: Martin Luther King's birthday, January 15, has been made a national holiday. Now it is up to us to see that King's memory is not treated like that of so many other saints, prophets and messiahs who have come and gone (usually dispatched by assassin or executioner) through the ages.

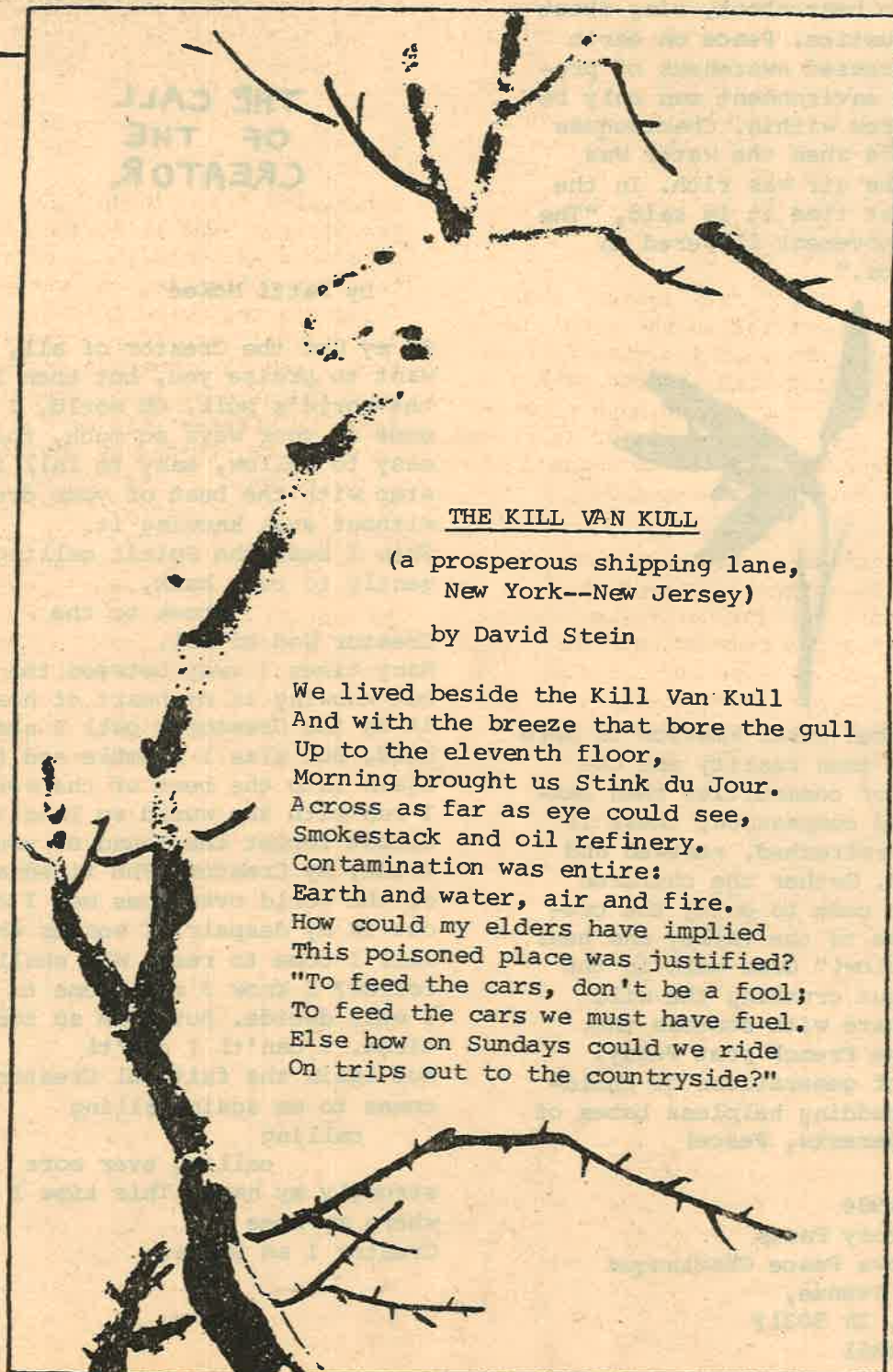
The treatment I refer to is the worship or idolizing of the person, and the forgetting of the essence of the person's message. We hound and accuse our prophets while they live, we eventually kill them, and once they are conveniently dead we dress them in glorious robes, name freeways and high schools after them, give office workers a day off in their name, and leave our own routines for the most part unchanged.

MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS A REVOLUTIONARY. He did not stop at the monumental task of crusading for the liberation of the blacks of America and the abolition of institutionalized racism in the South, he also called for withdrawal from Vietnam and an end to the arms race. He even rejected the capitalist economic system. Above all he proclaimed and practiced the duty to obey divine moral commandments over civil law, regardless of the earthly consequences.

I do not intend to go into a deep discussion of King's revolutionary principles, only to remind the reader that when our country pays tribute to him on January 15 it would do well to reflect on the entirety of his message, make the necessary connections, and go and do likewise.



Stu Mead



## THE KILL VAN KULL

(a prosperous shipping lane,  
New York--New Jersey)

by David Stein

We lived beside the Kill Van Kull  
And with the breeze that bore the gull  
Up to the eleventh floor,  
Morning brought us Stink du Jour.  
Across as far as eye could see,  
Smokestack and oil refinery.  
Contamination was entire:  
Earth and water, air and fire.  
How could my elders have implied  
This poisoned place was justified?  
"To feed the cars, don't be a fool;  
To feed the cars we must have fuel.  
Else how on Sundays could we ride  
On trips out to the countryside?"



# Law and Order Lessons

## by Rebecca Rosenbaum

The first thing I remember hearing anybody say on Election day was Ted saying it's snowing in the panhandle. Midwest November is tricky; it could be like sunny October, or it could be a winter blizzard. We didn't know what was going to come down on us, how chilly or how much, or how long it was going to take to move in. We were at the mercy of the weather and the law.

I'm nearsighted. Physically, my eyes are, and it is reflected in my being in the world. I have visions of the future, but often I am stuck in hindsight, trying to figure what has transpired in the past, or closely scrutinizing a piece of the immediate present. But once in a while there is a glimpse of something that almost seems prophetic.

A few nights before Election Day Steve had a dream. He rarely remembers his dreams. I love it when I have an opportunity to pry into another person's subconscious. Steve Marsden told me:

"While walking through the alley behind the bowling alley in the old home town, I see little pieces of pie on the pavement. The bowling alley is a block away from the school and many students go straight to the bowling alley after school, for burgers, shakes, fries, and pinball. Some of the pieces of pie are wrapped in cellophane, just the filling; little wrapped pieces of cheesecake or pecan pie filling sitting on top of graham cracker crusts. You know how dreams shift and suddenly you're not in the scene but watching it? Picking up a newspaper from the pavement I notice a family sit-com sort of comic strip. It's message: All of the school children are sad since the Korean jet liner was shot down. We should take them pies to make them feel better."

Election night Mary called. She read me an article in the local Omaha paper, about an incident in Iowa City. A junior high student took a survey and found that a huge proportion of her classmates lived in terror of nuclear war and did not expect to survive into the next decade.

\* \* \*

Mary called to find out about Steve. He was o.k., except that his right shoulder hurt from having his arm twisted, and his wrists were swollen and had red marks from plastic handcuffs.

Election day started out a little bit prophetic. Steve considered wearing his best shirt to federal district court in Omaha that morning, to the arraignment for 12 (selected out of a group twice that size) repeat trespassers at Offutt AFB. It's a white shirt, with boxes all over, created by subtle variations in the weave. Gracefully textured, white on white. I gave it to him 3 years ago. I found it in a pile of garbage near one of my favorite alleys. He almost opted not to wear it because the only t-shirt he had along was dark blue. I suggested he borrow my yellow t-shirt and it worked fine, underneath the white.

My yellow t-shirt is from Yellow Thunder Camp, an American Indian resistance camp in the Black Hills of South Dakota that has been in

existence for 2 1/2 years. It says WAKINYAN ZI OYATE and depicts 2 shackled hands, their chains broken by a lightning bolt as the hands rise from a mountainous land dotted with evergreen trees. The hands hold a peace pipe from which feathers hang. Steve says, if he had been sufficiently alert, he would have remembered the picture close to his chest, and he would have considered unbuttoning some buttons, to let those rising first show, as soon as the magistrate ordered his handcuffs to be removed in court. Or he would have unbuttoned his shirt while in the holding cell, a feat possible even with handcuffs.

But so often it is difficult to be sufficiently alert, to be thinking fast enough to have visions of what to do in the present, let alone in the future. I wish I had been alert enough that day to have figured how to make a statement to the magistrate, regarding what I witnessed that morning, without being in contempt of court. Or, better yet, I wish I had had the braveness to risk being in contempt of court. Or to be able to alter the course of the morning events.



Election day a dozen SAC trespassers were arraigned. Half were sentenced; half opted to delay sentencing one week. The sentences meted out were disturbingly arbitrary, ranging from a year's probation, to an hour in custody, to 55 days in jail. My observations of the proceedings reinforced my conviction that the path of justice diverges frequently and widely from the path of law, and that when that happens (which it does so often...) how could I have forgotten! It is vital to follow the path of justice.

I heard Magistrate Peck engage in conversations verging on comments that Presbyterianism is the best denomination. Peck is known for giving women sentences far lighter than those he imposes on men. In addition to discrimination on account of gender and religion, the magistrate admitted, to Jean Peterson, a 69 year old Omaha grandmother who had 4 counts of trespass against her, "I am now going to be guilty of discrimination by reason of age. You are too old to be confined to jail. I am sorry you brought yourself before court at this stage of your life..." She was sentenced to one hour in a holding cell.

Steve Marsden spent 6 hours in a neighboring holding cell that day, before he was arraigned. At about 9:20 a.m., while 11 defendants were casually conversing in the court-

room, Steve lingered in the hallway, just outside the court door, which was guarded by federal marshalls whose purpose was to prevent a group of about 30 defense supporters from entering court. A dialog ensued. Could we stand in silence in the back of the room? Could the proceedings be moved to a larger space? The arraignment was scheduled to commence at 9:30. After a while a man in a suit poked his head out of the courtroom and said is Steve Marsden here? Steve said yes I am. The marshalls were a bit surprised that one of the group to whom they had been denying court access was a defendant. Steve was requested to enter the courtroom. He said, is the judge there yet?

I'll come in when he does. The man disappeared. He reappeared and Steve said, is it 9:30 yet? But before he could utter his sentence he was jumped by the guards, thrown to the floor, and handcuffed. He was dragged into court and placed on the floor, prone, with his face in the carpet. Courtroom spectators overheard him say to the guards, don't you guys feel a little bit ridiculous?

At lunch recess the guards were overheard conversing about how they enjoyed their morning opportunity to beat somebody up a little, with government sanction. They said something to the effect of, it was just like being out on the street.

In addition to Jean Peterson, Steve's cell neighbors included Tommy Cordaro (who realized while there that all those from outside the Omaha area who were indicted were on Tom's personal list of contacts in other towns, which he kept in his office desk drawer) and a Mexican man who was an alleged illegal alien. The man had been in this country since he was 15, had spent no more than 2 months in Mexico during the past 10 years, had been married to an American citizen since 1980, and had his marriage license in his pocket. He came back to Omaha from the potato harvest in Idaho, to trade his old car in for another old car, when he was 'popped'. He spent 40 days in the Douglas County jail before he had a hearing with Magistrate Peck, a half hour sandwiched between a morning arraignment for 11, lunch break, a probation revocation hearing for 3; and Steve's arraignment, which topped off the magistrate's day.

Steve was brought in to the courtroom in handcuffs. He was given no opportunity to explain that he was mugged by federal thugs on his way to court. The magistrate assumed that Steve, who had driven over 200 miles to get to court, had "declined to enter," as Associated Press incorrectly reported. Peck made references to the morning event. Can I order the handcuffs to be removed or will you engage in further violence, he asked. Steve objected to the use of the word further. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail, for one count of trespass. His sentence was topped in duration only by those of Tom Cordaro (55 days) and Father Darrell Rupiper (40 days).

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# Welfare & Personalism

(part III)

by Jim Harrington



In the last issue of *Via Pacis* we reported on the efforts of the Coalition for the Homeless to have the Polk County Supervisors abolish their policy of limiting county relief grants to one time a year, for a maximum of one month for families with children, and two weeks for other destitute people.

After months of study and deliberation the Board of Supervisors on Jan. 3, passed a resolution which doubles the time that poor people can be helped by the county. Destitute families with children can be assisted for up to two months per year, and others without children, for one month. Or, to put it another way, people without means now have to worry only 10 or 11 months out of the year where they will sleep and what they will eat.

The action taken by the supervisors will cost Polk County taxpayers \$165,000 per year or about 50 cents per capita. Had the board removed the time limits completely, as we asked, the cost to Polk County taxpayers would have been \$1.5 million or about \$5 per capita. Noting that they have a responsibility to taxpayer and needy people both, the Board of Supervisors arrived at a compromise, the kind of compromise that poor people expect, where they always come out on the short end.

Some people view the result of our efforts as progress. I view the result as further verification of the utter futility of depending on a system as archaic and punitive as county relief to ensure that the basic minimum needs of the poor in our society will be met with a measure of certainty, decency and compassion. The principles and practices of county relief programs descend directly from the Elizabethan Poor Laws enacted in England in the 16th century. Their enactment was not so much out of a humanitarian concern for the poor as an attempt to custodize them, keep them in their place, keep them from bothering the haves, keep them from upsetting the established order, and keep them available as a source of cheap labor when such a need occurred. And this of course was to be accomplished with the least possible expense to the public.

Things haven't changed much in the operation of General Relief-type programs in the past 400 years. Let me illustrate with a "success" story that centers around a lady well-known and loved by the staff at the Catholic Worker. I'll call her Mary.

Mary is 55, a widow for seven years and the mother of several children, all grown, married and with children of their own. Her husband was ill a long time + when he died she had nothing of material value. But she had a lot of spunk and pride and tried hard to maintain her independence. She did not want to be a burden to her children who had troubles of their own making ends meet. She managed to get a kitchen job in a restaurant and set up an apartment of her own. She was fired because she couldn't maintain the pace of work and handle the pressure. Unable to pay her rent she went to Social Services, was helped for two weeks with a rent voucher and when that ended she had to give up her apartment.

Mary stayed with friends for a while, but fearing she would outstay her welcome, she came to the Catholic Worker for the first time several years ago. She secured other menial jobs and repeated the experiences described above. She drifted from mission to mission, from friend to friend, and would show up periodically at the CW for an interlude, with her possessions stored in several grocery bags. She got several live-in housekeeping jobs but these too were unstable. Her last job was as a housekeeper for an elderly man who was demanding and abusive. She received board and room and \$20 a week. Mary left this job abruptly early this winter and returned to Lazarus House in a panic. That morning the elderly man (probably senile) had become angry at her, produced a handgun, and threatened to shoot her.

While at Lazarus House, Mary would be up early every morning, searching the help-wanted columns. She made phone calls and filled out applications at hospitals, restaurants, etc. but nothing developed. She had already received a housing voucher to stay at a mission earlier in the year so she was not eligible for further assistance from the county, even though she had worked off the debt of the voucher in the county work program.

Mary stayed with us for over a month and was a joy to have around. She was kind and considerate to other guests and the staff. She was the first in line to help with chores. But she knew ours was a temporary shelter and worried that her continued presence might deprive someone else in need. She wanted a place of her own.

Social Services was contacted and with our help they granted a director's exception to their rules and agreed to help her with housing vouchers on an ongoing basis. They have done this. Mary is living in an efficiency apartment and the county issues a \$135 voucher for her each month. They also give her bus

tokens so she will have transportation to work two days a week at the county hospital to work off the value of the voucher. The other days she is expected to continue searching for employment and to bring in signed statements from employers that she has contacted them for nonexistent jobs. She goes to fast-food places, etc., and often the managers refuse to sign statements that she has been there. She is humiliated by this but goes on to the next place because it is required.

For food, Mary depends on food stamps and when those run out she goes to soup lines. Is Mary better off? Of course she is, she is no longer homeless. The Social Services staff is kind to her; they like her too. Exceptions have been made for her and she is receiving the maximum help available through General Relief, much more than the county is required to provide. But a "success" story? Mary likes working at the county hospital, but she is only allowed to work enough hours to pay off her rent voucher. If she was permitted to work one more day a week and be paid for it she would have a little pocket money. As it is she never has a dime in cash. She has no phone, no transportation. She cannot even go to an occasional movie. A "success" story? By general relief standards, yes. By standards of decency, no. Is that what our society wants?

It is hard for me to believe that in the year 1984 I am caught in the dilemma of trying to help improve a system that I know is intrinsically bad, that ought to be abandoned as an instrument of charity. Our society progressed significantly away from use of the general relief concept in the past 50 years but events on a national level in recent years have led us into headlong retreat with growing rather than diminishing dependence on dark-age methods of helping the poor.

Between 1960 and 1970 the incidence of poverty in this country was cut nearly in half, from 23% to 12%. This progress came primarily from the initiatives of the Economic Opportunity Act, better known as LBJ's War on Poverty. Many battles against poverty were won but the war was lost. It was lost by default when Lyndon Johnson made his famous choice between "guns and butter", guns to fight the Vietnam war or butter for the hungry. He chose guns and in so doing signalled the end of this nation's campaign to minimize if not eradicate poverty and injustice. So poverty with its degrading effects is again on the ascendancy with the official count at 18% and climbing.

15 years ago Michael Harrington (no relation to this reporter) began his book *Toward a Democratic Left* with the following: "The nation's statesmen proclaim that they seek only to abolish war, hunger and ignorance in the world and then follow policies which make the rich richer, the poor poorer, and incite the globe to violence." Last night I listened to our president's State of the Union address, the centerpiece of which was his "pledge of peace and prosperity. His budget message is not scheduled until next week. This will reveal, if ever so obscurely, his real priorities. My bet is that Michael Harrington's statement of 15 years ago will ring true. Our president will explain to us why the rich must be made richer (that will come under the heading of investment incentives and will somehow explain how satisfying the greed of a few will meet the needs of the many.) He will also explain why it is necessary to enhance our potential for global violence and annihilation although he probably won't give Casper Weinberger the 15% increase he says he needs to continue the pace of our arms buildup.

Finally he will explain to us why the poor must make some more sacrifices. After all, if we need more money for guns and at the same time the rich need more tax breaks to stimulate economic growth, then the slack has to be picked up somewhere. Of course if he eliminates all assistance to the poor he's still going to have a massive deficit, but in the name of fiscal responsibility some more selective cuts in food stamps, AFDC, energy assistance, SSI, etc. will at least create the illusion that progress is being made towards a balanced budget.

The pittance saved by these cuts have real meaning only to the poor people affected. As more and more needy people are made ineligible for federally assisted programs, and as more and more people are made needy by such dislocations in the economy as having their job skills made obsolete by high technology, then more and more people will have no choice but to turn to the archaic, punitive and underfunded system that is called General Relief.

Social progress has stopped. Social regression has the momentum. My God, how much further backward will we be driven in our pursuit of justice before we cry out, "Enough!"?

In the next issue of *Via Pacis* I will attempt to describe some alternative proposals of income maintenance for the needy.

*"Only a socially just society, one that strives to be evermore just, has reason to exist. Only such a society has a future ahead of it."*

POPE JOHN PAUL II  
BRAZIL, 1980





# Witness for the Innocents at SAC

by Nick McNamara

"True peace has for its foundation mutual confidence, whereas these appalling armaments show, if not a declared hostility, at least a secret distrust among the different nations. What should we say of a man who, wishing to show his friendly feelings toward his neighbor, should invite him to consider a certain scheme, holding a loaded pistol while he unfolds it before him? It is this monstrous contradiction between the assurances of peace and the military policy of the governments that good citizens want to put an end to, at any cost."

--Leo Tolstoi (from The Kingdom of God is Within You)

Wishing to put an end to the contradiction between the Gospel of peace and the military policy of our government, 85 "good citizens" gathered in Omaha from across the Midwest to take part in a sacramental demonstration at SAC air force base. December 28, the day people everywhere mournfully remember King Herod's slaughter of innocent children while attempting to silence the Good News of peace, was the day chosen to remind people that millions of innocent men, women and children are threatened today by a nuclear slaughter, and to declare to all that the Good News is living and speaking to us now: that Christ's peace is greater than the evil of dictators and war.

We came together two days before the Feast of the Holy Innocents to work out details and logistics, to develop a spirit of community, and to worship God our Creator in this newborn spirit. In the meetings that followed the scenario was worked out and the consensus finally reached. Through the sharing of

Sharon McNeil's delicious meals, and the enjoyment of Joe Taschetta and Steve Miller's great music, bonds of unity were born and grew. In our prayer services and liturgies we praised God and celebrated life. And on the morning of the 28th, all that had been put into preparing for the demonstration blossomed into an intense and powerful witness of love.

Around 10 AM all 85 of us assembled at Wherry Gate of Offutt AFB and gathered into one large circle to take part in the liturgy we had planned. A gift from John Middlecamp and his mother Kathy was the focus of our celebration. John was born just a few months ago, and in fact Kathy still breast-feeds him. But being so young, John was unable to make the trip from Madison, Wisconsin with his mother. Thus the milk Kathy usually gives to John, she collected and saved over a period of days, and it became their gift to us and our sacrament for worship.

Praying at the gate we recalled the unconditional love between mother and child, God and creation, which the mother's milk so purely represented. Then holding it all in a glass bowl, Kathy walked around the circle for each of us to dip out a finger of milk. We allowed the milk to enter us and fill us with the powerful love it symbolizes. The milk transformed us: we became children, innocent and free. And with the love and nourishment of the mother's milk, our first food, 42 of us turned and crossed the demarcation line in peace and strength, thus making our lives sacrament by committing civil disobedience.

The first group of CDers offered the milk to the awaiting security guards. They all refused the

gift of lifegiving milk, whereupon we poured out what was left, sharing it with Mother Earth, whence comes all life. Recalling the fact that we are all children, another group played "ring-around-the-rosie" as they crossed the line. The morbid tone of their "play" reminded us all of the evil and death we are up against when we confront weapons and war. (Ashes, ashes, we all fall down!) Upon falling, these children of God were carried away by security guards, as were many others in different groups. Everyone involved,

CDers, support people and SAC personnel, was moved by the power and intensity of the day, as well as the spirit of love and nonviolence which prevailed throughout the witness.

Of those who committed civil disobedience-- really divine obedience-- 15 had crossed the line before at other times. Those 15 people are now waiting to be arraigned. Two people crossed twice that same day and were held overnight, as were three others who refused to give their names and

addresses. All five of the people held were tried before Magistrate Peck the next day and given 20-day jail sentences. By now the sentences have been served and all are preparing for the next witness.

With this look back, someone who didn't know us might ask, "What did we accomplish? Why did we do it?" My answer would be: we did this because we are called to be faithful, not successful. Whether we changed the world or not doesn't matter. We proved the world hasn't changed us. And as good citizens of faith and love, we shall continue to do so, at any cost.

We shall not be moved!



by Frank Cordaro

The Church in Des Moines lost its best-known priest and the Catholic Worker lost a good friend. Msgr. Luigi Ligutti died Dec. 28 in Rome at the age of 88. Ligutti was known for many years as "the Pope's country agent". He served as the personal adviser to four popes on rural affairs and was known around the world as the advocate of the rural poor. As a country priest in Granger, Iowa during the 20s and 30s Ligutti organized the first federal homesteading project for seasonal coal miners. Putting people back on the land with a home of their own helped free them from mining companies' complete hold on their lives. He headed the National Catholic Rural Life Conference from 1941 to 1960 before moving to Rome where he became the first permanent observer for the Vatican at the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization. Dur-

## MONSIGNOR LIGUTTI



ing the 1930s Ligutti came to know the Catholic Worker movement and Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin personally. Both Dorothy and Peter made special efforts to stop in Des Moines when they were in the area to visit Ligutti and the Rural Life Conference to share ideas and concerns about the "Green Revolution," as Peter called the CW's back to the land efforts.

When we acquired our second house in Des Moines we called it Msgr. Ligutti House because of Ligutti's connection with Dorothy and Peter and his reputation as an advocate for rural justice. We had a special treat that same year when Ligutti visited us while in Des Moines to celebrate his 50th anniversary as a priest. This was Ligutti's last visit to the US before his death. Fr. John Gorman drove Ligutti to the house where he gave the house his blessing from the car. His time was short and walking was not easy. He talked

with us for about ten minutes and blessed the house in Latin to make sure it "took". He was delighted that we named the house after him and wished us God's blessing in all our efforts. He particularly enjoyed the gardens we were establishing on the vacant lots across the street from the houses.

Ligutti was a person whose life and message will ring with truth for many years to come. His saying which best captured the essence of his message was, "It takes a lot of little people in a lot of little places doing a lot of little things to make a big difference in the world." A personalist at heart and an activist by nature. May he rest in peace and continue his work from his new position!



# LET

# THEM

# DANCE

AN EAST-SIDER'S POLITICAL REVIEW  
(PART II)

by Russ Simmons

One of the highest principles I have learned about in 12 months at the Catholic Worker is the honesty inherent in doing hospitality. Truth--that funny, complicated term--strikes at the heart of our purpose, our daily toils, our protest activities. In the heart of the inner-city, we are confronted by it. A door freely open brings people who need food, families without homes, couples bereft of hope.

There are few miracles here. If they do occur, they are in small, dingey ways, enveloped in the grime of life's anguish and poverty. The flare is gone, but the realism is that much greater. We give of an unending (yet always almost empty) food patty. We fill and refill and again refill rooms, beds, couches. Soup bowls beside the sink stack higher.

To speak of truth in this context is to look blank into the face of our society's worst lies, then to discern and review them and realize their powerful manipulation. Our President offers a text-book example of prostituting the White House to interests that have no problems boldly lying to the public.

As he prepares to outspend his Democratic opponent by \$10 million, pushing campaign finance laws to the limit, Ronald Reagan's theme is to "Let them Dance!" Happily, he tells us he has brought Americans closer to democracy, equality, social justice, and world peace. The words, sweet music in our ears, excite patriotism and pride, and we jig to the tune of record-high employment and a robust recovery.

But Reagan's words are lies. Nothing less. An actor's pseudo-dramatic face, he is far less sincere than Duarte, the civilian mask that hid the faces of a repressive military junta in El Salvador. He says that minorities should vote for him, because he has spurred the economy and lowered interest rates. Yet one in 5 hispanics and 1 in 7 blacks are jobless, and Dr. Harvey Brenner of John Hopkins University, a noted researcher, argues that for every 1% unemployed, 36,000 will die from stress effects.

He says he is concerned for the family, yet he has cut back social programs vital to the children's health, while making it impossible for their parents to live on or off welfare. He has cut both school lunches and jobs training programs, student aid and food aid. He has placed arbitrary restrictions on eligibility for almost everything, playing political games with the formulas, because it is easiest to confuse people that way. Then he makes twisted statements to lead the unwary astray and make us forget the truth.

When Speaker O'Neil accused him of "forgetting the poor," our president called it "sheer demagoguery." No two words could better describe his administration, itself! Blatant anti-truth (like anti-matter) wreaks havoc on our



language, the thinking of our youth, and our own ability to decipher and comprehend the problems of this age. It is sheer demagoguery to re-define "human rights policies" as "stopping Soviet aggression [terrorism] abroad," and "Soviet terrorism" as "the revolution in Latin America." It is sheer demagoguery to call the Missile Experimental (MX) "the peace-keeper" when scientists admit it to be the most destabilizing weapon to date. It is sheer demagoguery to hoard cheese and butter and raisens when millions of people here fail to meet the same minimum daily eating requirements used to register malnutrition in countries like Etheopia.

But because of our pompous size and the sheer vastness of our domain, we do not comprehend the many pains and abuses suffered by people not far from our homes. We do not see the sickening, brutal killing of priests and nuns by Salvadoran Death Squads. We do not know the number of bag ladies on our streets, nor realize their plight. We do not know the 40,000+ who have abandoned their Iowa homes searching for work abroad, only to return disappointed, empty-handed, forced to beg from cruel agencies in order to obtain cheap shelter. We cannot feel the degradation of the "work-fare" programs he gives.

We vote to stop abortion, communism, and moral decay. We are tricked by the quiver in the president's voice. We follow the pried piper. He beckons good cheer:

"Ignore what you may see, and dance with us, instead!"

Let them dance, but not in Detroit. There, they too often stand watching their futures fall away.

They may dance, but not in the nation's souplines, because these folks are truly hungry and truly needy, and they are hurting with deep and bitter hurts.

If they are dancing, they must be the top executives. While these drew mammoth boosts in salary, all others in our workforce took great losses: in health insurance, pay rates, and cost of living allowances.

The only dancing in El Salvador was by the oligarchy the night that Reagan won the (1980) election. Yes, they danced and shot fireworks. Within two months, they had raped and shot three U.S. nuns. The kids in refugee camps there do not dance.

An old advertising manual once advised not to tell an audience something that, by experience, they knew to be untrue. Very simply, they will surely know that you are lying. Reagan can only succeed by our lack of cohesion and solidarity. Were we truly one, were we aware of our sisters' and brothers' plight, we would know this worm for what he is, and cast him appropriately behind us.



continued from p.7

Tom and Darrell are serving time for their act of re entry at Offutt on August 7th as well as for probation revocation, a result of previous re-entry.

(Editor's note: they're both out now)

Steve thought it was good for the hallway supporters to see him dragged away, to remind us how U.S. marshalls function, to remind us what life is like for people in Central America and elsewhere, who are treated like convicted criminals, like non-persons, when they haven't even made it into court, to remind us that the same mentality that rushes to apply handcuffs and force in a hallway will invade Grenada and will push the button at SAC.

What disturbed me more than the criminal lack of justice within the criminal justice system was the way our solidarity was whittled away. In the heat of the summer we demonstrate en masse, the greatest number of trespassers, on a single day, crossing the line at the home of SAC headquarters to say loudly and clearly, end the targetting. In the chill of late autumn some of us sit in cells, separated all around the country.

Defendants and spectators inside the courtroom had no idea what was happening to Steve. (Neither did the one reporter, whose story made it out over the AP wire.) For all they knew, Steve was choosing not to appear in court. Our lack of communication is one place where our lack of strenght begins.

How can I correct that? I can begin with myself. During the hallway melee, what those inside the courtroom did hear was me, instinctively shouting out DON'T HURT HIM when Steve was grabbed. I was the person standing closest to Steve. I wish my alertness then was as sharp as the hindsight I have now. I wish I had embraced Steve, and that someone else had embraced me, until we were a mass of 30 bodies somehow remaining non-violent while saying take us all or take no one. I wish the people inside the courtroom had refused to let the proceedings begin without Steve. I wish I had risked being in contempt of court and had sat in Steve's seat and said, I'm here to enter a plea of no contest on behalf of my friend you dragged away. In this season of the sun's darkness I look for the spark within myself to illuminate strength; to find some light within to enact my strong daydreams that rearrange the past, and carry them forth into the future, into this world on the brink of 1984.

\* \* \*

Labor day weekend I went to the Women's encampment near Seneca Depot. I crawled under the fence with the "Diggers" affinity group and was detained in the summer season's last major c.d. action. While in detainment I reflected on the differences, between being part of an action there, and at SAC. Some of the differences reflected variations between dealing with army vs. air force. But some of the differences reflected differences between groups involved. What did it boil down to, I wondered? East coast chutzpah vs. midwestern reserve? Women vs. mixed gender? Religious overtones vs. secular? Generation gaps? At Seneca, I felt love

and respect for the people with whom I've worked here in the heartland, the experiences we've shared; the tones that have been set by a core group of hardworking persistent people. The tones are religious, reverent, respectful. I missed the rapport I've felt us estalish, amongst ourselves, and the mutual respect I feel when we are dealing with air force personnell. At Seneca it was hard to strike up a conversation with our 'captors! I know it wasnt the fault of the women involved. The army men seemed to be functioning under instructions not to chat, not to let the human show, underneath the camoflauge garb. But I felt the folks at Seneca had some things to learn from us.

And I felt we had much to learn from them. We have so much we need to share, we who resist nuclear disaster, all over the country. What impressed me most about Seneca was the incredible solidarity: thousands

of ban and bar letters issued to Jane Doe, no information given. By the time I showed up, equipment for fingerprinting wasn't even in the processing room. They got rid of that on day one. I usually don't give much more thought to giving my fingers to the authorities than I do to giving my footprints to the sand. But, unless one is under arrest, one doesn't have to submit to fingerprinting, the women at Seneca said. Maybe getting rid of that step of the process at SAC is one place we can begin, one way to share our little lights of strength within, and fan them in to something bright enough to illuminate our solidarity. Meanwhile, I'll look inside my own darkness for windows that light up my strength, and hope to find enough to share. Happy new year, everyone.

Addendum: since this writing there have been more arrests at SAC (see p.9) and more sentencings: Jean Peterson will be sentenced soon, and Kevin McGuire is in Douglas Co. Jail. Planning meeting Feb. 18 for August SAC action. Call Tom Cordaro 319-895-8237.



# STOP CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

by Anthony Peeks

The last few days have been quite distressing to me, really quite painful: Human beings getting the electric chair!

Opening the newspaper and seeing their loved ones

waiting for the final moment, and the press covering it like a going-out-of-business sale--sickening, damned sickening!

How long are we to let this go on, how long? What examples, what injustices couldn't we use to justify reinstating the death penalty--no not one, / or vengeance is his not a bunch of people who won't see the kingdom anyway, / or they'll be the death of us all yet. I heard the church bell ring, I saw the tears and heard the screams, "they killed him, they killed him."

I felt helpless, I could do nothing.







VIA PACIS  
 DMOW-----/Diocese of Des Moines  
 PO Box 4551-----/ PO Box 1816  
 Des Moines, IA 50306  
 515-243-0765



"By night by night" says the gospel.  
 Has there ever stood so encompassing  
 a darkness as ours  
 Neither birth nor return  
 are the ruling images  
 but a clock (1984)  
 And a sword suspended.

Never the less  
 Though some are driven witless  
 And some grow numb  
 Let us take hope  
 Let us seize hope  
 Let us claim hope  
 Let us beat hope out of despair  
 with hammer blows  
 Let us shape hope anew  
 out of misshapen despair

"By night by night" says our gospel  
 "Shone the glory of God."  
 Sparks of the hammer blows  
 like a cloud of fireflies  
 are the glory  
 of the God  
 of Life.

*Daniel Berenson*

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